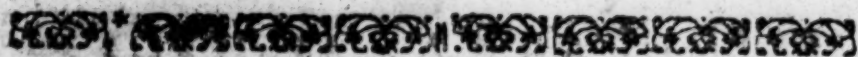


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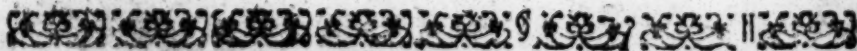
Dr. SACHEVERELL's
SERMON

Before the

HONOURABLE

House of Commons,

May 29. 1713.



1062

Sabbati 30. die Maii 1713.

Ordered,

That the Thanks of this House be given to the Reverend Doctor *Sacheverell* for the Sermon by him Preached before this House Yesterday at *St. Margaret's Westminster*; and that he be desired to Print the same; and that Sir *John Pakington*, Sir *William Whitelocke*, Mr. *Hungerford*, and Mr. *Newland*, do acquaint him therewith.

Ordered,

That no Person do presume to print the said Sermon, but such as Doctor *Sacheverell* shall appoint.

Paul Jodrell, Cler' Dom' Com'

*False Notions of LIBERTY in Religion
and Government, destructive of both.*

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd before the

H O N O U R A B L E

House of Commons,

A T

St. Margaret's Westminster,

O N

Friday, May 29. 1713.

B Y

H E N R Y S A C H E V E R E L L, D. D.
Rector of St. Andrew's Holborn.

London: Printed for Henry Clements; And Re-printed and
Sold by Edward Waters in Essex-street, 1713.

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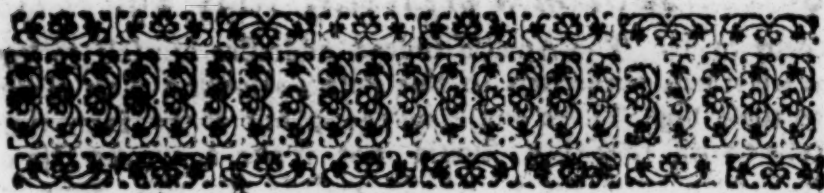
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B^QL



I P E T. ii. 16.

*As Free, and not using your Liberty for
a Cloak of Maliciousness, but as the
Servants of God.*

TH E S E Words are Part of the Epistle appointed for the Service of this Day. Wherein the Great *Apostle of the Circumcision* presses the Duty of *Subjection to the Civil Power* upon the converted *Jews*. A People who always stood in Need of this Necessary Doctrine; a Generation always prone to Rebellion, for which the least Motive of Discontent was thought a sufficient Plea; a People, who (as far as 'twas in Humane Power) had rejected GOD Himself from being their Sovereign; and therefore it was not to be expected that they should treat his Vice-Gerents with more Reverence. With this precarious Allegiance, (for 'twas no better) they seldom failed to serve even their native Princes, who Ruled them under their Own O Economy and Religion. But now after the Dissolution of their Government, the Yoke of Foreign Rulers so gall'd their stiff Necks, that they could not bear it with any tolerable Patience. For God's Own Heritage, His chosen Generation, His Royal Priesthood, His holy Nation, His peculiar People, Vers. 9. to submit themselves, like Slaves, to the tyrannical Impositions of Heathen Emperors and Governors, seemed such a Paradox; that all the Humility and Meekness of the Christian Religion could not soon reconcile them

them to it. The Apostle indeed addresses himself to 'em with much tenderness in this Point, allowing their claim to these high Titles and Privileges; but at the same time tells them, that they should not make a wrong Use of these peculiar Favours, which, rightly apply'd, were indeed the most prevailing Obligations to Obedience; but that they ought to consider their unhappy Circumstances, that they were *Strangers and Pilgrims* in foreign Countries, *Vers. 11.* under a State of Persecution and Tryal, and therefore were more particularly bound to abstain from *fleshy Lusts, which war against the Soul*; having their *Conversation honest among the Gentiles, that whereas they spoke against them as Evil-Doers, they might by their good Works, which they should behold, glorify God in the Day of Visitation*; *Vers. 12: &c.* and to recommend that Religion to the unconverted World, by their Quietness, Patience and Submission, which that Religion so earnestly enjoyn'd. Having thus prepar'd the way to this great Duty of Subjection to Government, he lays it down in its full Extent and Obligation. Submit your selves, to every Ordinance of Man for the Lord's sake; whether it be to the King as Supreme, or unto Governors, as unto them that are sent by him, for the punishment of Evil-doers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the Will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the Ignorance of foolish Men, *Vers. 13. &c.* Nothing, he thought, could so much obstruct the Progress of Christianity, or cast such a Reproach upon it, as Disobedience to the Civil Power, against which it had guarded with so many Precepts, under no less a Sanction, than that of eternal Damnation. But to leave them wholly inexcusable, without the least colour for this sin, the Apostle particularly takes Care to specify the Falseness and Impiety of that popular Objection, so frequently urg'd in its Defence, drawn from the mistaken Notions of Christian liberty; whereby they asserted, that they as Freemen were p'terly exempt from all other Jurisdictions but that immediately of God; and that they ow'd no Homage or Subjection to those who did not govern them by their own Laws, or the Divine Appointment; that Obedience on any other Grounds was meer slavery, inconsistent with their

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their Religion, and that consequently neither *Cæsar*, nor any of his Roman Pro-Consuls or Deputies had any just Claim to their Allegiance. That this was their avow'd Principle their own Historian informs us, *Μητε Ῥωμαίοις, μητε ἄλλῳ τινὶ δαλύνειν, ἡ Θείᾳ*. And in another place, *ἵπαιδον τῆς ἐλευθερίας ἀντιστοιχεῖν, καὶ Ῥωμαίους μὴ μὴδὲ κρείττους ἐαυτῶν ὑπολαμβάνειν, Θεὸν δὲ μόνον ἡγούμενον δεσποτῶν.* *Jos. Lib. vii. C. 34. C. 37.* It seems, those specious pretences of Rebelling in Defence of Religion. and for Liberty and Property, appear'd very early in the Christian Church; in order to subvert the Foundations of Christianity. But some Moderns, notwithstanding this Apostolical Prohibition, have reviv'd the old Objection, and manag'd it as if it never had been answered, (the usual Method of that Faction;) but have indeed not a little improv'd and refin'd upon its Iniquity. For as their Predecessors resist'd their Governours, because they were Heathens, and as such Enemies to their Faith, and so not entituled to their Allegiance, as they pretended.

These their Successors rebell'd against their Natural and Legal Sovereign, governing them by the exactest Measures of their own Laws, dethron'd and Murther'd him, not only without, but contrary to all Law, for defending the pure and inviolable Religion of Christ's Church, established by those very Laws, and maintaining the Rights and Properties of his Subjects, by the just and due Execution of them. Thus Rebellion has always pleaded Liberty in its Justification, by representing Government as a meer Anti-Christian Bondage, which a free People are not bound to submit to, but may throw off at their Will and Pleasure. In Opposition to which false and pernicious Notion, the Apostle in this Chapter does, in the Name, and by the Authority of God, expressly found the Original of All Government upon the Delegation of the Divine Power to his Vice-Gerents, as sent by him; who therefore acting by his Commission, justly demand Obedience for the Lord's Sake, by Virtue of his indispensable Command, and by an Obligation of Conscience. And to put an End to all Doubts and Controversies about this weighty Duty, he assures them that their Objections
against

against it were equally Frivolous and Wicked; that Christianity had indeed rendred them Free, but not from Government; and that if they presum'd to abuse this their Liberty to its Prejudice, they made the Gospel a Shelter of their Wickedness, an ἐκάλυμμα τῆς κακίας, a sanctify'd Cover, or (as 'tis well render'd) a Cloak for their Sin; for that no Mortal could pretend to any other Liberty, but what was consistent with, Flowing from, and Resolvable into, his Relation to his Creator, and Supreme Law-Giver, as a Servant of God. *As Free, but not using your Liberty for a Cloak of Maliciousness, but as the Servants of God.*

From which Words I shall endeavour to draw out the Force of this excellent, but ill understood Argument, overthrowing the very Foundation of all Resistance against the Civil Power: And this I shall do.

I. First, By Stating the True Notion of *Christian Liberty*, shewing wherein it consists, and how it may be us'd lawfully by us, as the Servants of God.

II; Secondly, By Instancing in some of the Abuses of it, wherein it may be so perverted, as to be made a Cloak of Maliciousness.

III. Thirdly, By proving the Absurdity, as well as Wickedness, of such Abuses of our Liberty.

IV. Lastly, By Laying before you the happy Consequences of True Liberty, and the Misery and Slavery of the Mistaken Notions about it, and applying the Whole to the present Solemnity.

I. And first, I am to State the true Notion of Christian Liberty, to shew wherein it consists, and how it may be us'd Lawfully by us, as the Servants of God. That there is such a thing as Christian Liberty, needs not to be prov'd; but is here taken for granted by the Apostle, who presupposes it as the Ground of this Objection. *As free, &c.* says he. Now, if we consult and compare those Places of Ho-

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ly Scripture, where this Doctrine of Liberty is fully asserted, we shall find that it consists of these three Branches. Name'y,

1. A Freedom from the Power and Dominion of Sin and the Devil, and the Curse of the Moral Law. This Freedom is purchas'd for us by the Death of Christ, by which we are Partakers of the Spirit of Adoption, and are deliver'd from the Bondage of Corruption, into the Glorious Liberty of the Sons of God, as is prov'd at large, Joh. viii. 32, 36, Rom. vi. 15, 21. and viii. 2, 3. Gal. iii. 13: and iv. 6, 26. and 5. 1. &c. This is a Mystical Exemption from all Spiritual Servitude; but is so far from being an Exemption from Laws, that the very Essential Condition of this Liberty consists in a perfect Obedience to all the Injunctions of Christianity.

2: It consists in a Freedom from the Ritual Ceremonies of the Mosaic Law, and the Spirit of Bondage to fear, Abrogated by our Saviour: Rom. viii. 15. Galat. iv. 4. Col. ii. 14. 1 Cor. xiv. 40. But tho' that Hand Writing of Ordinances is blotted out, the Gospel is Establish'd in its room, which prescribes our Liberty within its just Bounds; investing the Church with an Authority to appoint such Ceremonies, as it judges proper to preserve Order and Decency, Uniformity and Edification, and obliging its Members to the Observation of them.

3. It consists in a Free Use of all Things that are in their Nature Indifferent; that is, Things concerning which the Law is silent, or has made no Determination, leaving us at our own Choice, either to act or not to act. Yet even in this Case, our Christian Freedom (tho' relating to Things perfectly Indifferent in themselves) where it may Occasionally prove a Matter of Offence to Weak Brethren, is entirely over-ruled by the Law of Scandal, which abridges it under very severe Penalties, as we may read at large in the 14th to the Romans.

Of these three Parts the perfect Law of Liberty is Constituted, S. James i. 25. which is so far from supposing an Immunity from Laws, that it consists in an Obligation and Obedience to them. This is all, and certainly a very Glorious Liberty, which God has indulg'd Us as Rational Creatures. Thus indeed we are Free, but 'tis still as the Servants of God: Which leads me in the second Place,

¶ II. To Instance in some of the Abuses of This Liberty, wherein it may be so perverted, as to be made a Cloak of Maliciousness. All which in general will be found to take their Rise from that false, but prevailing Opinion of Liberty, that it consists in an Immunity from Laws, which is a direct Contradiction to the True Notion of it, delivered to us by God in the Scriptures; and is in short nothing but an unwarrantable and sinful Licentiousness, turning the Grace of God into Lasciviousness, in all Lewdness and Irregularity both in Principle and Practice. Upon which Two Particulars I will endeavour to make good this Charge against this Synagogue of Libertines, strictly so called.

1. *As to Principles.* It would be endless to Recount all the Blasphemies, Heresies, Schisms, and Errors, of all Kinds, Justified and Maintain'd under This specious Pretence by Our Modern Infidels: Most of which have been lately Collected, and Dress'd up in a New Form to recommend them to the World in their Celebrated Piece, The Discourse of Free-Thinking, as 'tis call'd! By the Authors of which, in open Defiance of the Government, of the Church, and of the State the whole Body of Christianity, with all its Sacred Mysteries and Ordinances, are expos'd as Priestcraft and Imposture; Divine Inspiration, and the Holy Scriptures represented as Enthusiasm or Forgery; the Soul as Material, and Mortal; the Worship of God as senseless Fear and Superstition; Heaven, and Hell, as meer Dreams and Fables; and in a word, All the Laws of God, and the Church, and all the Creeds, and Terms of Communion, as Spiritual Slavery, in Opposition to this Liberty and Free-Thinking. These Things being notorious, We need only Appeal to the World for the Truth of the Facts, which are Glory'd in by Many, and Deny'd by None. Pass we on therefore,

2. *Secondly to their Practice.* Which we shall find to be a true Transcript of their Principles; that is, the Principles of Infidelity, and a Disobedience to all Laws both Humane and Divine. For such a Free-Thinker, if he be consistent with himself, must be a Free-Actor too, and can live under no Jurisdiction or Controul; he is equally without Guide, or Government; Owes as little Allegiance to his Prince, as Faith to his God;

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God; He is Dependent of Neither, and a Rebel against Both; sets up his Own Will, as the Supreme Measure of his Actions, for which he is answerable to nobody but himself. Right and Wrong, Good and Evil, are idle Notions and empty Speculations with him and in a word he lives and dyes in Confusion, Anarchy, and Libertinism, that is in direct Contempt of, and Contradiction to all the Injunctions both of God and Man. If these are not Abuses of Liberty, pretending an Exemption from all Obligations, as a Cloak of Impiety, I think nothing deserves to be called so; and we our selves also must cancel all the Fundamental Distinctions between Good and Evil. To make which farther appear, I proceed to the Third General Head; namely,

III. Thirdly, to prove the Absurdity, as well as wickedness of such Abuses of our Liberty. The very mentioning these Things, one would think a sufficient Confutation of them. To prove this, is only to prove, that there is really such a Thing as Government in the World; and that it is supported and maintained by Divine and Humane Laws, to regulate our Minds, and our Actions; that we have the Gospel for the One, and Statutes for the Other; and that Faith and Obedience are Duties enjoined by God and Man; that our Understandings are as much Subject to God, as our wills, that We are equally Accountable for Both, and as much oblig'd to Think and Believe, as we are to Act by the Rules and Laws prescrib'd us in his Word. And consequently, that it is as reasonable to affirm, that a Man may Rebel, commit Murder, Adultery, &c. and not be Criminal and Obnoxious for taking this Liberty, as it is to affirm that he may deny God in Speculations, or contradict that Creed to which He requires our Assent. The Folly and Impiety of this wild Scheme lie so intermingled, that the same Arguments demonstrate Both. To assert the Contrary, is to make the Creature independent of the Creator, and to destroy that Relation which is Eternal, and as unalterable as his Nature. These Obligations are congenial with his Being, and commence from the very Moment of His Birth; They grow up with Him, and are for ever inseparable from Him: He stipulates for their Performance in Baptism;

tism, and can expect Salvation on no other Terms. The very Constitution of All Law is Founded upon, and Resolvable into them; And he that denies them, denies the Being either of God, or Himself; Obligations from the one to the Other, necessarily Resulting from the Allow'd Existence of Both. So that whosoever excludes Divine Right out of Government, must fall into this miserable Dilemma, that either God has no Right of Himself, or cannot Delegate it to Others. Either of which Assertions is absurd Blasphemy. And it will be found a real, tho' sad Truth, that whatever Cloak these Libertines may cast upon their Schemes, they really believe no God; for all their Principles of Government exclude him out of them, and are plainly founded on nothing but downright Atheism.

But if we were to set aside Religion in this Point, (which is its chief Foundation) and consider Government only under a political View, it can never be suppos'd that It should leave its Subjects Arbitrary Judges of the Equity of its Laws after Their Establishment, so as to Obey, or Disobey them, as they think fit. For this would be to suppose a Power, not only exempt from, but superior to the Laws (tho' to shew its Inconsistency, inferior to them likewise) which would take away their Force, and render all Government precarious, and consequently useless.

Upon what Bottom therefore would these Lawless Men Found their Liberty? By what Authority do they these Things? Or who gave them this Authority? Whence was it? From Heaven, or of Men? They own the Authority of neither; They Disavow the Jurisdiction and Power of Both. But they still Insist, 'tis their Natural Right, as Free Born Men, whereby none is subject any farther than Compact, and Consent oblige Him. I ask, therefore, What do they mean by this so much talk'd of Natural Right? Is it essentially, and independently Inherent in Themselves, or Communicated by another? If they say the Former, Can any thing belonging to a Dependent Being, be itself Independent? If the Latter, who is that Other who so Communicated this Right? Who can Communicate a Natural Right, but the Author of Nature? Or rather a Communicated Natural Right is a Notion

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Notion absurd in itself ; and so indeed is any Natural Right at all, as it relates to Creatures: To speak strictly, no Being has any Natural Right, but God ; who by Virtue of Creation, has a Natural Essential Right to the Obedience of His Creatures. But those Creatures themselves have Naturally no Right to any thing ; unless it can be prov'd, that they had a Natural Right to be Created. To set aside that Epithet, therefore, what Right at all did God ever give Him (for we have shewn that He alone could give it Them) to pay no Obedience any farther than Compact obliges ? He has been to far from ever granting any such Thing, that He has frequently commanded the direct Contrary, without Limitation or Reserve.

I would not have this Argument misunderstood or misapply'd, to justify such Consequences as may seem to be drawn from it, to the Prejudice of Humane Liberty. For, though Mankind have no Rights but what they receive from God ; or those delegated by Him : Yet, when those Rights are invested in them, by His Authority, they ought not to be taken away or destroy'd by the Usurpation or ill Management of a Tyrannical or Arbitrary Governour. And an humble Submission, for Conscience sake, to higher Powers, and a due Use of the Rights which God has given both to Princes and to Subjects, is so far from tending to Slavery, that it is the most effectual Security against it.

Then, as to Humane Constitution ; Is not every Man, by Being Born under any Stated Government, and owing his Protection to it, Subject, as such, to all the Laws and Constitutions of that Government ? So that This suppos'd Liberty is foreclos'd from his very Birth ; and the Moment he comes into the World, he is under a State of Subjection. As he grows up, and is farther incorporated into it, his Obligations still rise and increase, in Proportion to his Age and Abilities. He is sworn into all the Duties of Allegiance, and gives farther Pledges of it to his Prince, his Church, and his Country. Every Man has his Station, and Place, in the Community ; and no one is under such a State of Liberty, as to be such an Individual, as not to belong to the Body Politick, or bear
no

no Relation to it. There is, therefore, no Medium betwixt a True Subject and a Rebel; the Minute a Man ceases to be One, he commences the Other. And as for the Popular Objection of Right, Property, or Privilege, whether they consist in Honour, Power, or Estate, are to be considered as Original Grants from the Crown, or Legislature, and can be only held conditionally, in Subjection to the Laws; which stand as a Guard of the Royal Prerogatives on the One Hand, and of the Liberties and Possessions of the People on the Other. From whence 'tis evident, That an Immunity from those Laws must destroy Both, overturn the very Foundations of Government, and bring in such a Confusion, as will banish all Peace, Civility, and Humanity out of the World.

From all which undeniable Premises, not only the Truth but the absolute Necessity and indispensable Duty of Obedience, is inferr'd; Actively, in all that we can; and Passively, in all that we cannot lawfully submit to; and that not only out of Fear, but for Conscience Sake, excluding all Resistance whatsoever to the supreme Power, as impious and illegal, according to that excellent Determination of the Legislature upon the Great Rebellion, A.D. Anno 12 Car. II. c. 30. That by the Undoubted and Fundamental Laws of this Kingdom, neither the Peers of this Realm, nor the Commons, nor both together, in Parliament, or out of Parliament, nor the People Collectively, or Representatively, nor any other Persons whatsoever, ever had, have, hath, or ought to have, any coercive Power over the Persons of the Kings of this Realm.

IV. I come now to my last Particular; to lay before you the happy Consequences of True Liberty, and the Misery and Slavery of the Mistaken Notions about it; and to apply the whole Discourse to the present Solemnity.

Having shewn the Absurdity and Wickedness of this false Principle in itself, as utterly inconsistent with Reason, and Religion, Gospel, and Law; the contrary Position must be irrefragably true, and entirely agreeable to the Laws of God and Man: And there needs not much Argument to prove, that the Effects must resemble the Causes; and, that Happiness, and Prosperity, Peace, and Freedom,

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Freedom, must be the natural Product of Subjection to certain Laws; and Shame, and Misery, Confusion, and Slavery, of their pretended Immunity from All.

There is nothing that carries such an irresistible Charm in it, and that so much engages our Affections, as LIBERTY; it is the darling Blessing of Mankind, without which, all others are insipid, and for the obtaining of which, they would willingly part with All that they enjoy without it. This is the Pearl of that great Price, as to this Life, that we would Sell all we have to purchase it; The very Notion of SLAVERY makes Nature start, with Abhorrence and Relentment, at a thing which reduces it to Shame and Indignity, Scorn and Contempt, and what it detests under any Form, or Condition. Golden Chains can never recommend Servitude, or make a Palace of a Prison. But as nothing is so much, or so justly desired, as LIBERTY; nothing is so much abus'd, and misunderstood, and perverted to such wicked Purposes! 'Twas this specious Fallacy the Author of all Rebellion made use of to beguile our first Parents; and with which he has ever since deluded their Posterity to Sedition and Disobedience. *It is the Signal and Party word of Faction, to amuse credulous and ignorant People with Fears and Jealousies, about what they think dearer to them than their Lives; and, therefore, 'tis no wonder, that they so frequently lay them down, in the pretended Vindication of what, perhaps, is not in danger.* But all this Out-Cry is often rais'd by Politick Mutineers, as a base and false Insinuation upon our Governors both in Church and State, to represent them as Encroachers upon the Freedom and Properties of the Subject, whenever they would incite them to Insurrection and Rebellion.

This is their constant Topick of Declamation against the Church, and Monarchy; as if a due Execution of the Laws, which were made (under God's Providence) as the only Bulwark against Popery and Slavery in our Kingdom, was the most certain way to bring those Abominations upon us. Is there any Reason to be assign'd, why we should not as much love and value LIBERTY as They? Can they imagine us such Fools, as to sacrifice our Ease and Interest

Interest for nothing, to make ourselves Beasts of Burden; and to court Servility, Fetters and Misery, only by way of Compliment to our Superiors? No! this is their Cloak of Maliciousness, which they cast over their hypocritical Designs; and with which they cloath the Devil, and transform him into an Angel of Light. They believe it not themselves; They know these are Impostures to pass upon the Vulgar; as the Poet tells us, 'twas the old Art of a Spreader of Sedition,

Spargere Voces

In Vulgum Ambiguas, & querere Conscius arma. Virg.

This well-manag'd ambiguous Word LIBERTY has often, with its Noise, beat all the true Sense of it out of the Nation; which will be ever found to consist, not in an Immunity from, (as They pretend) but in a due Subjection to all Laws, both Ecclesiastical and Civil; which is evident from the express Words of God. For therefore the Gospel is called the *perfect Law of Liberty*, whereby we know the Truth, and the Truth shall make us Free, St. James 1. 25. John 8. 32. 2Cor. 13: And we are commanded to stand fast in the Liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us Free, and not to be entangled again with the Yoke of Bondage, Gal. 5. 1. And since we are call'd unto Liberty, we must not use our Liberty for an Occasion to the Flesh, but by Love serve one another, Vers. 13. Which Words of St. Paul are an exact Comment on St. Peters, in the Text; declaring jointly, that *perfect and true Liberty* is nothing else but the Service of God, in Obedience to His Laws; and that 'tis abus'd, for a Cloak of Maliciousness, when 'tis made use of for an Occasion to the Flesh, that is, to serve any illegal or sinful Purposes. The Patrons of this *False Liberty* either cannot, or will not, distinguish betwixt Slaves and Subjects; They represent all Obedience as Shackles impos'd upon Humane Nature, and make Religion and Government such a Yoke as it cannot bear. What these Men mean by Nature is plain; that is, Nature in its degenerate and corrupted State, (as they would have it) let loose to all its vicious and enormous Lusts and Passions, and wholly sub-

due

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dued to their tyrannical Usurpations; which, indeed, is the most true Account and exact Definition of Slavery. *Whosoever committeth Sin*, (says our Saviour) *is the Servant (or Slave) of Sin*, John 8. 34. Know ye not, (says the Apostle) *that to whom ye yield yourselves Servants to Obey, His Servants ye are to whom ye Obey; whether of Sin unto Death, or of Obedience unto Righteousness?* — But being made Free from Sin, and become Servants unto God, ye have your Fruit unto Holiness, and the End Everlasting Life, Rom. 5. 6. And St. Peter's express Words may determine this Point; *While they promise them Liberty, they themselves are the Slaves of Corruption; For of whom a Man is overcome, of the same is he brought into Bondage* 2. Eph. 2. 19. This, indeed, is the most odious and detestable Bondage Humane Nature can degrade itself to; by which it offers Violence to its own Reason, contradicts its own Laws, deserts its own Happiness, apostatizes from God its Creator and Redeemer, and subjects itself to the Dominion of its greatest Enemy and Tyrant the Devil; who pays his Vassals with Wages answerable to his accursed Drudgery; Pain, Sickness, Shame, and Death here, and everlasting Damnation with himself hereafter. But the Service of God is perfect Freedom, his Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all his Paths Peace; His Yoke is easy, and his Burden light; and His Commandments not grievous, but such as tend to promote our real Pleasure and Welfare in this World, and secure our Eternal Felicity in the next; This is evident in all the practical Duties of Religion, and no less in the necessary Matters of Faith; wherein God, by Virtue of his Sovereignty, may undoubtedly command our Belief implicitly, in such Things as he thinks fit to reveal, tho' they are above our Reason to comprehend, without the blasphemous Imputation of enslaving his Creatures. And where the Objects are suited to our Reason, He commands us to Exercise it in Thinking as freely as we can, within the Bounds of Sobriety and Humility, in examining the Grounds and Foundations of our Faith to the very bottom; which the deeper we search into, the fuller Conviction we shall receive of its Truth, the most infallible Remedy for that Scepticism Infidelity, and Atheism, that is the certain

Product of this Liberty falsely so called! Which as it overturns all Religion, is of no less destructive Consequence In Government, (upon which it so much depends) by striking at the very Root of its Authority, denying Obedience to its Laws, cancelling the Power of the Sovereign, subjecting him to the Arbitrary Will of the Populace, rendring our Constitution Anarchy, the Crown a Ball of perpetual Contention for ambitious Usurpers and Tyrants, our Princes contemptible, and our People Slaves. And God deliver us from such enthralling and damnable Licentiousness, with which we can be neither good Christians, nor good Subjects; neither faithful Servants to God, our Queen, our Church, nor our Country.

From the lamentable Effects of which, his gracious Providence did so wonderfully deliver us on this blessed Day. For to this abominable Licentiousness, both in Opinion, and Practice, are chiefly to be ascrib'd the Rise, Progress, and unhappy Success of the Great Rebellion, and all the Miseries and Oppressions, consequent thereupon, under which these Kingdoms so long groin'd. For that the Enemies of the Government might the more effectually attack it in its Vital Part, such Seditious Principles were infus'd into the People, as might prepare them for the Execution of the most barbarous and horrid Crimes. The Inclosures of Religion were accordingly laid open; and under the Pretence of Liberty of Conscience, such a prodigious Swarm of Enthusiastic Sects, Schisms, and Heresies sprung up, as quite eclips'd and confounded the True Doctrine, and Discipline of the Church. So that (to speak in the Language of the Legislature) Act. 12. Car. 2. c. 30. This Party of Wretched Miscreants, desperately wicked, and hardened in their Impiety, (who were as far from being true Protestants as true Subjects) having strengthened themselves in Power and Faction, by odious Arts and Devices, Plotted and Contriv'd the Ruin and Destruction of this excellent Monarchy, and with it of the true Reformed Protestant Religion, which had been so long protected by it, and flourished under it; and found it necessary, in order to the carrying on of their Pernicious and Traiterous De-

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signs, to throw down all the Bulwarks and Fences of Law, and to subvert the very Being and Constitution of Parliament; that so they might at last make their way for that impious Fact, that execrable Murder, that most unparallel'd Treason committed in their Fanatick Rage on the Sacred Person of our Sovereign; whereby the Protestant Religion received the greatest Wound and Reproach, and the People of England the most unsupportable Shame and Infamy that was possible for the Enemies of God and the King, to bring upon us. With which blessed Martyr, at once fell both the Crown, and the Mitre, our Religion and Government, our Laws and Liberties; and under the Pretence of Redressing Grievances, and the Fear of Popery and Arbitrary Power, the Nation was reduc'd into the most intolerable State of Affliction, Bondage, and Atheism; that ever a People abandon'd by God, and given up to their own Lusts, could endure. Act. Anno 12. Car II. c. 14. Out of all which deplorable Confusions, Divisions, Wars, Devastations, and Oppressions, Almighty God, the King of Kings, and Sole Disposer of all Earthly Crowns, and Kingdoms, by his All-swaying Providence and Power, miraculously rescued us by the Wonderful, Glorious, Peaceable, and Joyful Restoration of our King to the Actual Possession and Exercise of his Undoubted Hereditary, Sovereign, and Legal Authority over us: After sundry Years forc'd Extermination into Foreign parts, by the most traiterous Conspiracies, and armed power of Usurping Tyrants, and execrable perfidious Traytors.

By which the Church and Government were Resettled upon their Ancient Foundations, the Dignity, Freedom, and Power of our Laws, and Parliaments reviv'd, and the True Liberty of the Subjects, as the Issue of them, was Re-established on this Happy Day; A Day which ought for ever to shine in the British Calendar, distinguish'd with more than ordinary Marks of Honour and Regard by every True and Loyal Member of our Constitution. A Day, to which We owe all the Publick Benefits, that We, or Our Posterity, can Enjoy. A Day, to which We owe so many Blessings flowing from the
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gracious and mild Administration of the Pious Remains of that Royal Progeny, under whom We flourish with all the Mercies, that can render any People most completely Happy; would Our Duty, and Gratitude rise in Proportion to them. God Almighty has, indeed, distinguish'd Her Reign (and may He long continue to do so,) above Those of Her Royal Ancestors, with such signal Marks of His peculiar Kindness, as seem to point Her out as much the Favourite of Heaven, as the Darling of her People. The Success with which He has always crown'd her Arms has been as much Superior to Theirs, as the Glorious Peace she has Obtain'd by Them, Exceeds all that ever these Nations were yet bless'd with. This indeed was the only End, for which She Drew her Sword of Justice; and when it had done its Great Work, and Impartially distributed the Rights and Liberties of Contending Kingdoms, and settled her own upon that most exact Balance of Interest and Power; in Goodness and Mercy She Sheath'd it, and put a Stop to that Deluge of Blood and Treasure, which has been so cruelly and profusely lavish'd: Which great Blessing could only have been accomplish'd, under God, and herself, by such a Faithful, Wise, and Steady Ministry, and such a Parliament. Who have been always ready to sacrifice whatever else is dear to them for the Publick Good; and have no other Designs to carry on, but such as may Promote the Safety, honour, and Welfare of the Crown, the Church, and Their Country: And 'tis no wonder that such an Administration should Provoke the Malice, Envy, and Rage of an abandon'd Faction, who have sufficiently shewn how well they are affected to all Three. Who since they have lost the good Opinion of the People, whom they had so long deluded, are impatient in being destitute of doing Mischief; who as they behave themselves most tyrannically in Power, are most seditious when they are out of it; equally Enemies in both Cases to True and Real Liberty. A Word, by which they themselves mean nothing, but the Power of Betraying their Sovereign, and Enslaving their Fellow-Subjects, and of Overturning the Constitution both in Church and State.

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In Order to which, when they thought the Project was ripe, Obedience to the Civil Power upon Principles of Conscience (without which it can never stand) was expell'd as a Slavish, nay a Damnable Doctrine; though the express Doctrine of Christ and His Apostles. What ridiculous Folly is it to bear such Men set themselves up for Patriots, and talk of the Fears of Popery, and the Danger of their Country, which was never so much in Danger, as from Themselves! We though they have been so providentially defeated, are still crying on the same pernicious Conspiracy, endeavouring to poison the Kingdom again by spreading their Factionous Principles, and stirring up the People in every Corner of it. To prevent which, we see the absolute Necessity of Keeping up the Remembrance of this Good Day; to disappoint and overbrow the wicked Designs of such Traiterous, Heady, and High-minded Men; who under the Pretence of Religion and Liberty, and God's most Holy Name, had contriv'd, and wellnigh effected, the utter Destruction of this Church and Kingdom; and who will never be at rest, till they have brought the same dismal Calamity upon us again.

But surely we have smarted so severely under this Egyptian Bondage, as never more to permit the heavy Yoke to be put on our Servile Necks, or ungratefully complain and murmur at those Persons who have done so great things for us. One would think, we needed no other Argument to recommend the Excellency of our well-temper'd Constitution (so particularly calculated for the true Liberty of the Subject, as well as the honour and dignity of the Prince) to our Esteem, Zeal, and Love, which we cannot in the least Tittle depart from with safety. Let us stedfastly adhere to that both in Church and State, as the very Basis upon which our whole Happiness stands; and which, if inviolably maintain'd, may make us despise our Enemies, and defy the Gates of Hell to prevail against us.

For which End let us beseech God in the Words of our Church, to send forth His Light and His Truth for the Discovery of these Depths of Satan, this Mystery of Iniquity; to infatuate and defeat all the secret Counsels of the Ungodly; to abate their Pride, assuage their Malice, and confound their Devices. To strengthen the Hands of our Gracious Sovereign
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Queen ANNE, and all that are put in Authority under Her, with Judgement and Justice, to cut off all such Workers of Iniquity as turn Religion into Rebellion, and Faith into Faction; that they may never again prevail against us, nor triumph in the Ruin of the Monarchy and Church amongst us. And that God would protect and defend our Sovereign Lady the Queen with the Royal Family, from all Treasons and Conspiracies; that He would be unto her an Helmet of Salvation, and a strong Tower of Defence against the Face of all Her Enemies. And as for those that are implacable, that He would cloath them with Shame and Confusion; that upon Herself and Her Successors, the Crown may forever Flourish.

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